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First Named Inventor Bakx, Martinus C. M.

Art Unit 3728

Examiner Name David Fidei

Attorney Docket Number D-7875

ENCLOSURES (Check all that apply)

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Remarks

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Firm Name MEADWESTVACO CORPORATION

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Printed name TSUGIHIKO SUZUKI

Date 1-23-06

Reg. No. 36,321

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventive Application of

Martinus C. M. Bakx

Serial Number

10/638,236

Filed:

August 7, 2003

For

Wraparound Carton and Blank

Art Unit

:

3728

Examiner

:

David Fidei

Attorney's Docket

:

D-7875



Hon. Commissioner for Patents

P.O. Box 1450

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Sir:

SUBMISSION OF PRIORITY DOCUMENT AND CLAIM FOR FOREIGN PRIORITY

Applicant hereby claims priority under 35 USC 119 on the basis of UK Patent Application No. 0103023.8 dated February 7, 2001.

Enclosed is a certified copy of UK Patent Application No. 0103023.8 to support the claim of foreign priority benefits under 35 USC 119 in connection with the above-identified application.

Respectfully submitted,


Tsugihiko Suzuki, Reg. No. 36,321

Date: January 23, 2006

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I, the undersigned, being an officer duly authorised in accordance with Section 74(1) and (4) of the Deregulation & Contracting Out Act 1994, to sign and issue certificates on behalf of the Comptroller-General, hereby certify that annexed hereto is a true copy of the documents as originally filed in connection with the patent application identified therein.

In accordance with the Patents (Companies Re-registration) Rules 1982, if a company named in this certificate and any accompanying documents has re-registered under the Companies Act 1980 with the same name as that with which it was registered immediately before re-registration save for the substitution as, or inclusion as, the last part of the name of the words "public limited company" or their equivalents in Welsh, references to the name of the company in this certificate and any accompanying documents shall be treated as references to the name with which it is so re-registered.

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Dated 21 December 2005

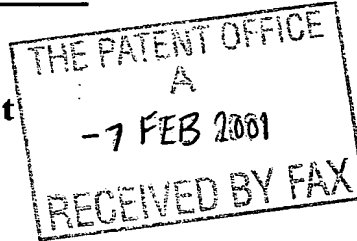
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Patents Form 1/77

The
Patent
Office07FEB01 E604128-1 D01072
P01/7700 0.00-0103023.8Patents Act 1977
Rule 16

Request for grant of a patent

The Patent Office
Cardiff Road
Newport
Gwent NP9 1RH

1. Your Reference

APUK019996

2.

0103023.8

7 FEB 2001

3. Full name, address and postcode of the or of each applicant

The Mead Corporation
Courthouse Plaza NE
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Patents ADP Number

If the applicant is a corporate body, give the country/state of its incorporation

Ohio, USA

772095006

4. Title of the invention

Wraparound Carton and Blank

5. Name of your agent

Hepworth Lawrence Bryer & Bizley

"Address for Service" in the United Kingdom to which all correspondence should be sent

Bloxam Court
Corporation Street
Rugby
Warwickshire CV21 2DU
United Kingdom

Patents ADP number

5608575007 ✓

6. If you are declaring priority from one or more earlier patent applications, give the country and the date of filing of the or of each of these earlier applications and the or each application number

Country

Priority Application Number

Date of Filing

7. If this application is divided or otherwise derived from an earlier UK application, give the number and the filing date of the earlier application

Number of earlier application
Date of filing

8. Is a Statement of Inventorship and of right to grant of a patent required in support of this request

Yes

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Continuation sheets of this form

Description

8 ✓

Claim(s)

3 ✓

Abstract

1 ✓

Drawing(s)

7 ✓ A

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Priority documents

Translation of priority documents

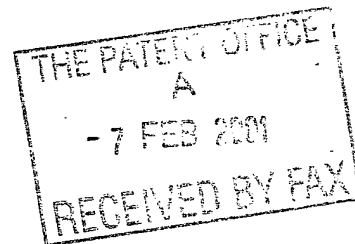
Statement of Inventorship and right to grant of a patent (Patents Form 7/77)

Request for preliminary examination and search (Patents Form 9/77)

One ✓

Request for substantive examination (Patents Form 10/77)

Any other documents



11. I/We request the grant of a patent on the basis of this application

Signature

Hepworth Lawrence Byrd & Byrd

Date

7 February 2001

12. Name and daytime telephone number of person to contact in the United Kingdom.

Rupert Symons (01788) 577000

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WRAPAROUND CARTON AND BLANK**DUPLICATE**

The present invention relates to a wraparound carton and blank. More particularly, the invention relates to a wraparound carton and blank for packaging articles such as pots of foodstuff, for example yoghurt, in which the base of the article protrudes through an aperture in the base of the carton.

It is known to provide wraparound cartons for packaging such articles.

10 In US 2 926 781 to Dickens et al it discloses a carton for packaging a pair of articles such as food jars in which a pair of apertures are provided through which the top of the jars may protrude, the blank being further provided with apertures in the side walls through which the jar labels may be viewed.

15 US 3 189 215 to Currie discloses a wraparound carton for packaging bottles, slotted apertures extending across the width of the top wall and being arranged to accommodate the necks of two bottles.

20 When erecting wraparound cartons which a portion of the article or articles to be packaged is capable of protruding through one of the carton walls, it is often difficult to ensure that the carton is erected with side walls of the same height, when the ends of the blank are side walls to be secured together and so that the top and base walls of the carton are parallel.

The present invention seeks to overcome or at least mitigate the problems of the prior art.

25

One aspect of the invention provides a wraparound article carrier for packaging an article such as a pot of foodstuffs, for example, the carton comprising opposed top and base walls interconnected by opposed side walls thereby forming a tubular structure, an aperture being provided in the base wall to accommodate a portion of the article wherein a bracing tab is struck from the aperture and folded so as to act as a spacer thereby ensuring that the side panels are constructed to a predetermined height.

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There may further comprise a securing flap to be secured to a side wall panel and wherein the bracing tab is struck from said top or base panel to define the aperture, the bracing tab extending into the securing flap and hingedly connected to the securing flap.

- 5 Preferably, the bracing tab extends to a flange of the article or to a panel opposed to the respective top or base panel.

According to an optional feature of this aspect of the the distance between the free edge of the securing flap and the fold line of the bracing tab may be less than the distance between the
10 free edge and the fold line of the securing flap.

A second aspect of the invention provides a blank for forming a wraparound carrier for packaging an article such as a pot of foodstuffs, for example, the blank comprising a first top panel, a first side wall panel, a base walls and a second side wall panel hingedly connected
15 together in series for forming a tubular structure, and an aperture provided in the base wall to accommodate a portion of the article wherein a bracing tab is struck from the aperture and so folded in a set up condition to act as a spacer thereby ensuring that the side panels are constructed to a predetermined height.

20 According to an optional feature of the second aspect of the invention, there further comprises a securing flap hingedly connected to the base panel to be secured to a side wall panel in a set up condition and wherein the bracing tab is struck from the base panel to define the aperture, the bracing tab extending into the securing flap and hingedly connected to the securing flap. Preferably, the bracing tab may extend to a flange of the article or to a panel opposed to the
25 respective top or base panel, in a set up condition.

According to another optional feature of the second aspect of the invention, the distance between the free edge of the securing flap and the fold line of the bracing tab is less than the distance between the free edge and the fold line of the securing flap.

30

A third aspect of the invention provides a wraparound article carrier for packaging an article for example a primary carton, the carton comprising opposed top and base walls interconnected by first and second side walls so as to form a tubular structure, an aperture being struck from the top wall so as to receive a protruding portion of the article wherein the

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aperture extends into a panel adjacent the top wall so as to facilitate the folding of the top wall over the protruding portion during construction of the carton.

5 According to an optional feature of the third aspect of the invention, the panel adjacent the top wall is a securing flap arranged to secure the top wall to one of said first or second side walls.

Preferably, the securing flap is disposed on the outside surface of the side wall and a portion of the side wall is disposed in the aperture to engage the article in the aperture.

10 A forth aspect of the invention provides a blank for forming a wraparound article carrier for packaging an article such as a sachet for example, the blank comprising in series a first side wall panel, a base wall panel, a second side wall panel, a top wall panel and a securing flap, an aperture being struck from the top wall panel so as to receive a protruding portion of the carton in use wherein the aperture extends into a panel adjacent the top wall panel so as to
15 facilitate the folding of the top wall panel over the protruding portion during the folding of the blank to form a carton.

Preferably, the adjacent panel is the securing flap.

20 A fifth aspect of the invention provides a method of forming a wraparound carton comprising a first side wall panel, a second side wall panel, a top wall panel and a securing flap, hingedly interconnected in series so as to form a tubular structure, the top wall panel having an article receiving aperture struck therefrom and extending into the securing flap, the method comprising the steps of:

- 25 i) introducing the article to the carton;
ii) folding the top wall panel and securing flap about a first fold line hingedly interconnecting the second side wall panel; and
iii) introducing a protruding portion of the article into the extended portion of the aperture whilst folding the top wall and securing flap, thereby allowing the securing
30 flap to clear the article.

According to an optional feature of the fifth aspect of the invention, there may further comprise the step prior to step (ii) of placing the article on the top panel and folding the base wall and second side wall around the article.

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According to an optional feature of the fifth aspect of the invention, there may further comprise the step of folding a bracing tab out of the plane of the base panel before the folding and introducing step and the step of bringing the bracing tab into abutment on a flange of the article or on the top panel before folding the securing flap toward the opposed panel.

Exemplary embodiments of the invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of a blank for folding a carton according to one embodiment of the present invention;

FIGURES 2 and 3 are perspective views of the blank of Figure 1 during successive stages of the carton erection article loading procedure with the carton and articles inverted;

FIGURE 4 is a perspective view of the carton formed from the blank of Figure 1 in a fully set-up and loaded condition;

FIGURE 5 is a blank for forming a carton according to a second embodiment of the present invention;

FIGURE 6 is a perspective view of the blank of Figure 5 illustrating one stage of the carton erection procedure with the carton and articles in an inverted state;

FIGURE 7 is a perspective view of the carton formed from the blank of Figure 5 in a fully set-up and loaded condition;

FIGURE 8 is a plan view of the blank for forming a carton according to a third embodiment of the present invention;

FIGURE 9 is a perspective view of the blank of Figure 8 at one stage of the carton erection procedure with the carton and articles shown in an inverted state; and

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FIGURE 10 is a perspective view of a carton formed from the blank of Figure 8 in a fully set-up and loaded condition.

Referring to the first embodiment of the invention as illustrated in Figures 1 to 4 and in particular to Figure 1, there is illustrated a blank 10 of paperboard or like foldable sheet material for forming a wraparound carton. There comprises a plurality of panels for forming a top wall, a base and opposed side walls. In this embodiment, the blank 10 comprises in series a securing flap 12, base wall panel 14, first side wall panel 16, top wall panel 18 and second side wall panel 20 hingedly interconnected in series along fold lines 20, 24, 26 and 28 respectively.

There may further comprise one or more aperture structures. In Figure 1 there is shown a pair of aperture structures 30 and 32 are struck from the securing flap 12 and base wall panel 14. Each structure is substantially identical and therefore only aperture structure 30 is described in further detail.

Structure 30 comprises a spacer tab 34, struck from securing flap 12 and base wall panel 14 so as to interrupt fold line 22, spacer tab 34 is hingedly connected to securing flap 12 by fold line 38. The tab is defined by cut line 58, with each end of cut line 58 being connected to fold line 38 by relatively short straight mutually parallel cut lines 59a and 59b. The end of tab 34 remote from fold line 38 is, in this embodiment, substantially straight parallel to fold line 38 being defined by one edge of aperture 36.

Opposed pairs of article retention structures 42, 44; 46, 48 are preferably provided along fold lines 26 and 28 respectively, the structures being arranged so as to interrupt the aforesaid fold lines. Each retention structure is substantially identical, and therefore only structure 46 is described in further detail. It can be seen from Figure 1 that structure 46 comprises a protruding portion 50 of top wall panel 18 arranged so as to interrupt fold line 28 and being defined by curved cut line 52.

The structure further comprises a pair of spaced parallel cut lines 54 and 56 which are, in this embodiment, arranged substantially perpendicular to fold line 28, and extend from curved cut line 52 and terminate part way down second side wall panel 20. The cut lines 54 and 56 thereby define a tab portion 57.

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It is envisaged that the carton of any of the embodiments of the present invention can be formed by a series of sequential folding and gluing operations in a straight line machine so that the carton is not required to be rotated or inverted to complete its construction. The folding process is not limited to that described below and may be altered according to particular manufacturing requirements.

It can be seen from Figure 2, in which the carton and articles A are inverted for the sake of clarity, that top wall panel 18 is placed so as to overlie the planar top face of the articles A. All references to directions are to be understood as if the blank and articles are in an upright state. Top wall panel 18 is dimensioned, in this embodiment, such that flange portions F of the articles A extend beyond fold lines 26 and 28.

Spacer tabs 34 are then folded downwardly out of alignment with securing flap 12 thereby revealing aperture 36 completely. Subsequently, first side wall panel 16 is folded inwardly out of alignment with top wall panel 18 and base wall panel 14 is folded inwardly and upwardly about fold line 24 out of alignment with first side wall panel 16. The elongated nature of apertures 36 enables base wall panel 14 to fold over the base of articles A without fouling on securing flap 12.

Subsequently, securing flap 12 is folded upwardly and inwardly about fold line 22 and second side wall panel 20 is folded downwardly and inwardly about fold line 28. Thus, spacer tabs 34 are guided between second side wall panel 20 and the side of the respective article A and are thus brought into engagement with the under side of flange portions F of the articles A. The outer face of securing flap 12 is brought into face contacting relationship with the inner face of second side wall panel 20. Panels 12 and 20 are preferably secured together using glue or other suitable means known in the art.

The inward folding of first and second side wall panels 16 and 20 causes flange portions F to protrude laterally beyond fold lines 26 and 28 and the thickness of the flange portions causes tabs 57 to fold outwardly slightly beyond the plane of first and second side wall panel 20. The tabs 57 thereby engage underneath the flanges F and assist in the retention of the articles A within the carton. The carton is now in a fully set-up and loaded condition as illustrated in Figure 4.

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It will be apparent that tabs 34 are dimensioned such that during the folding operation, their positioning underneath flanges F ensures that the lower edge of second side wall panel 20 is substantially co-extensive with fold line 22 when securing flap 12 is brought into face contacting relationship with second side wall panel 20. thus ensuring that, in this embodiment, base and top wall panels 14 and 18 are substantially parallel because the side wall panels are the same height on both sides. The alternative arrangement of achieving such a parallel arrangement with a relatively small engagement flap requires the flap to be secured to the outer face of second side wall panel 20. The disadvantage of such an arrangement is that the side wall surface is interrupted and therefore the display of information and/or advertising indicia is compromised.

Turning now to the second embodiment of the invention as illustrated in Figures 5 to 7 and in particular to the blank as shown in Figure 5, the first and second embodiments are similar and therefore like numerals have, where possible, been used for like parts where possible with the addition of the prefix "1". Only the differences between the second embodiment in relation to the first have therefore been described below.

The second embodiment of Figure 5 differs from the first embodiment largely in relation to the aperture structures. In this embodiment, due to the shallower nature of the articles A, the aperture structures 130 and 132 are contained entirely within the base wall panel as it is not necessary for the apertures 136 to be elongated to prevent securing flap 112 fouling on the base of the article A.

As can be seen from Figure 6, the erection procedure is substantially identical to that of the first embodiment and, as before, tabs 134 act as a spacer so as to ensure that the top and base walls of the erected carton are parallel as shown in Figure 7.

Turning now to the third embodiment of the invention as illustrated in Figures 8 to 10 and in particular to the blank as shown in Figure 8: again the blank of the third embodiment is similar to the first embodiment and like numerals have where possible been used for like parts where possible with the addition of the prefix "2". Only the differences between the third embodiment in relation to the first have therefore been described below.

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As can be seen from Figure 8, the blank of Figure 8 differs from that of Figure 5 in that spacer tab 234 does not follow the cut line 258 defining aperture 236 rather the side edges thereof are defined by extensions of cut lines 259a and 259b.

- 5 The erection procedure of the blank to form the completed carton of the third embodiment is substantially identical to the erection procedure of the first and second embodiments and is shown in Figure 9. The fully set-up and loaded carton formed from the blank of Figure 8 is shown in Figure 10.
- 10 It will be recognised that as used herein, directional references such as "top", "base", "end", and "side" do not limit the respective panels to such orientation, but merely serve to distinguish these panels from one another. Any reference to hinged connection should not be construed as necessarily referring to a single fold line only: indeed it is envisaged that hinged connection can be formed from one or more of one of the following, a score line, a frangible line or a fold line,
- 15 without departing from the scope of invention.

- It should be understood that numerous changes may be made within the scope of the invention. For example, the carton may be adapted to accommodate a single article or more than two articles. However the size and shape of the apertures and panels may be adjusted
- 20 according to the particular requirements of the articles to be packaged and other known article retention means may be employed. The present invention and its preferred embodiment relates to a carton which is shaped to provide satisfactory rigidity to hold items such as primary containers securely but with a degree of flexibility. The shape of the blank minimises the amount of paperboard required for the carton. The items can be applied to the carrier by
- 25 hand or automatic machinery. It is anticipated the invention can be applied to a variety of carton or tray types and not limited to those of the wraparound sort.

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CLAIMS

1. A wraparound article carrier for packaging an article such as a pot of foodstuffs, for example, the carton comprising opposed top and base walls interconnected by opposed side walls thereby forming a tubular structure, an aperture being provided in the base wall to accommodate a portion of the article wherein a bracing tab is struck from the aperture and folded so as to act as a spacer thereby ensuring that the side panels are constructed to a predetermined height.
2. An article carrier as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a securing flap to be secured to a side wall panel and wherein the bracing tab is struck from said top or base panel to define the aperture, the bracing tab extending into the securing flap and hingedly connected to the securing flap.
3. An article carrier as claimed in claim 2, wherein the bracing tab extends to a flange of the article or to a panel opposed to the respective top or base panel.
4. An article carrier as claimed in claim 2 or claim 3, wherein the distance between the free edge of the securing flap and the fold line of the bracing tab is less than the distance between the free edge and the fold line of the securing flap.
5. A blank for forming a wraparound carrier for packaging an article such as a pot of foodstuffs, for example, the blank comprising a first top panel, a first side wall panel, a base walls and a second side wall panel hingedly connected together in series for forming a tubular structure, and an aperture provided in the base wall to accommodate a portion of the article wherein a bracing tab is struck from the aperture and so folded in a set up condition to act as a spacer thereby ensuring that the side panels are constructed to a predetermined height.
6. A blank as claimed in claim 5, further comprising a securing flap hingedly connected to the base panel to be secured to a side wall panel in a set up condition and wherein the bracing tab is struck from the base panel to define the aperture, the bracing tab extending into the securing flap and hingedly connected to the securing flap.

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7. A blank for forming an article carrier as claimed in claim 6, wherein the bracing tab may extend to a flange of the article or to a panel opposed to the respective top or base panel, in a set up condition.

5 8. A blank for forming an article carrier as claimed in claim 6 or claim 7, wherein the distance between the free edge of the securing flap and the fold line of the bracing tab is less than the distance between the free edge and the fold line of the securing flap.

10 9. A wraparound article carrier for packaging an article for example a primary carton, the carton comprising opposed top and base walls interconnected by first and second side walls so as to form a tubular structure, an aperture being struck from the top wall so as to receive a protruding portion of the article wherein the aperture extends into a panel adjacent the top wall so as to facilitate the folding of the top wall over the protruding portion during construction of the carton.

15 10. An article carrier according to claim 9 wherein the panel adjacent the top wall is a securing flap arranged to secure the top wall to one of said first or second side walls.

20 11. A article carrier as claimed in claim 10 wherein the securing flap is disposed on the outside surface of the side wall and a portion of the side wall is disposed in the aperture to engage the article in the aperture.

25 12. A blank for forming a wraparound article carrier for packaging an article such as a sachet for example, the blank comprising in series a first side wall panel, a base wall panel, a second side wall panel, a top wall panel and a securing flap, an aperture being struck from the top wall panel so as to receive a protruding portion of the carton in use wherein the aperture extends into a panel adjacent the top wall panel so as to facilitate the folding of the top wall panel over the protruding portion during the folding of the blank to form a carton.

30 13. A blank according to claim 12 wherein the adjacent panel is the securing flap.

14. A method of forming a wraparound carton comprising a first side wall panel, a second side wall panel, a top wall panel and a securing flap, hingedly interconnected in series so as to

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form a tubular structure, the top wall panel having an article receiving aperture struck therefrom and extending into the securing flap, the method comprising the steps of:

- i) introducing the article to the carton;
- ii) folding the top wall panel and securing flap about a first fold line hingedly interconnecting the second side wall panel; and
- iii) introducing a protruding portion of the article into the extended portion of the aperture whilst folding the top wall and securing flap, thereby allowing the securing flap to clear the article.

10 15. The method of claim 13 further comprising the step prior to step (ii) of placing the article on the top panel and folding the base wall and second side wall around the article.

15 16. The method of claim 15 further comprising the step of folding a bracing tab out of the plane of the base panel before the folding and introducing step and the step of bringing the bracing tab into abutment on a flange of the article or on the top panel before folding the securing flap toward the opposed panel.

17. A carton substantially as hereinbefore described.

20 18. A carton substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 1, 2, 3, 4 or 6, 7, or 9, 10 of the drawings.

19. A blank substantially as hereinbefore described.

25 20. A blank substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 11, 5 or 8 of the drawings.

21. A method substantially as hereinbefore described.

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ABSTRACT

A wraparound carrier and a blank for forming a wraparound article carrier for packaging an article such as a pot of foodstuffs, for example, the carton comprising opposed top and base walls interconnected by opposed side walls thereby forming a tubular structure, an aperture being provided in the base wall to accommodate a portion of the article wherein a bracing tab is struck from the aperture and folded so as to act as a spacer thereby ensuring that the side panels are constructed to a predetermined height.

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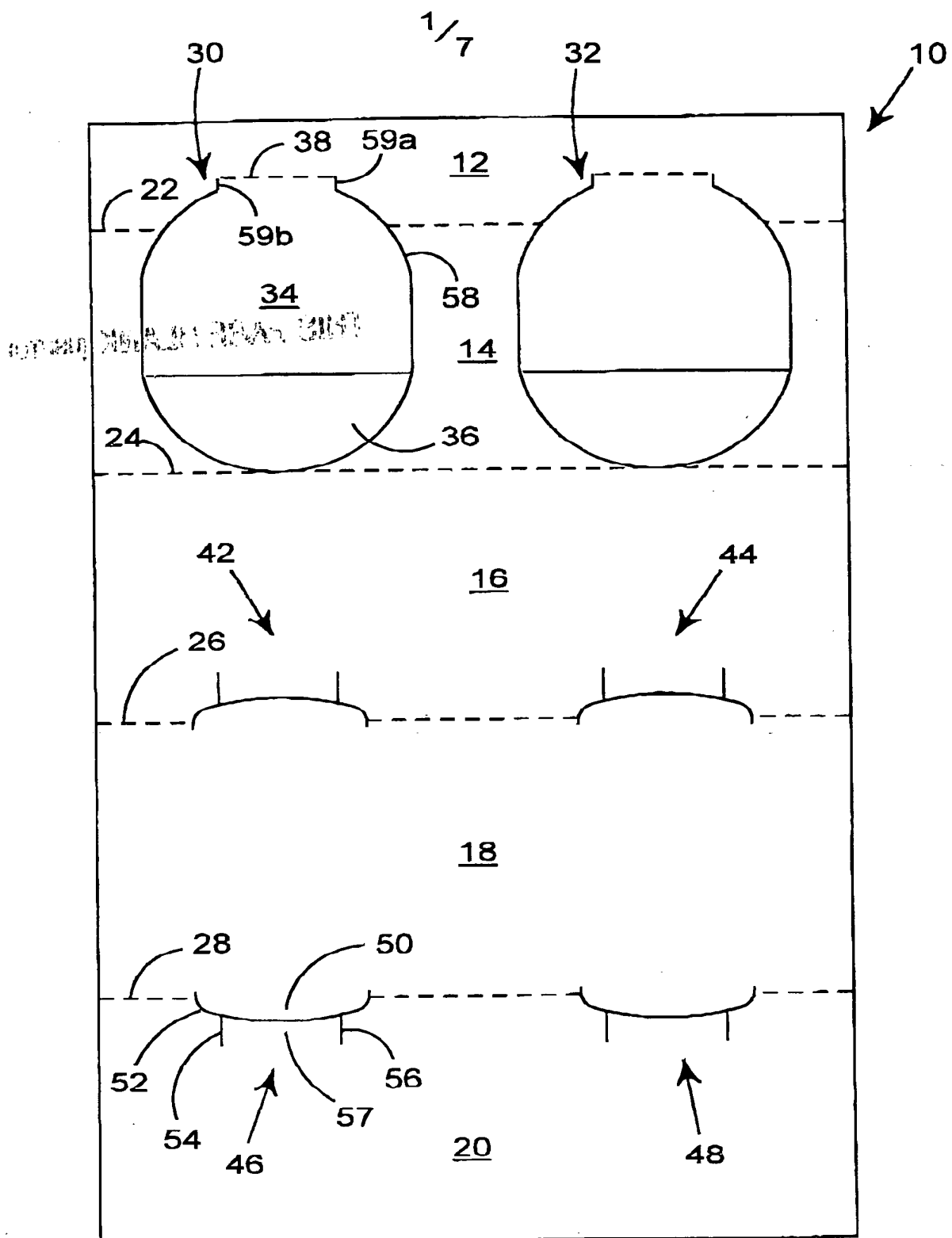
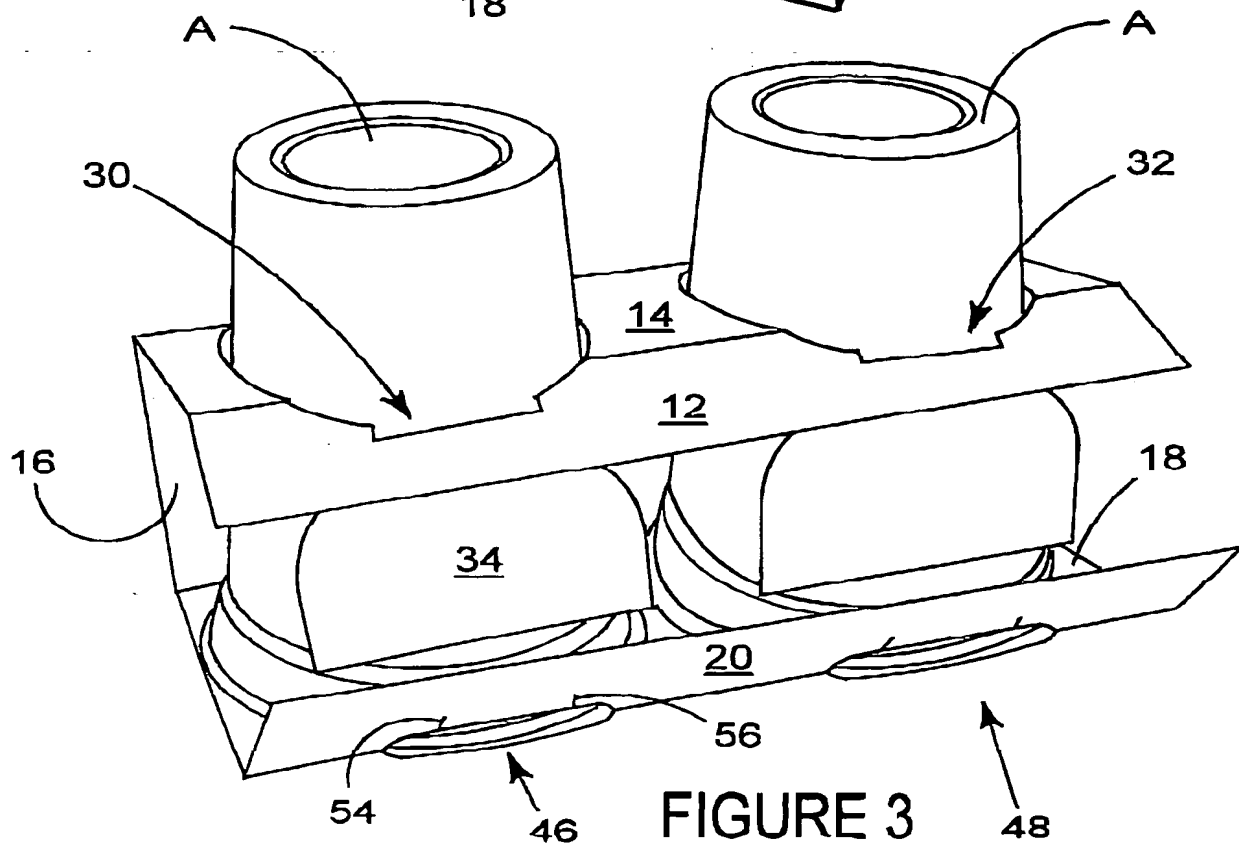
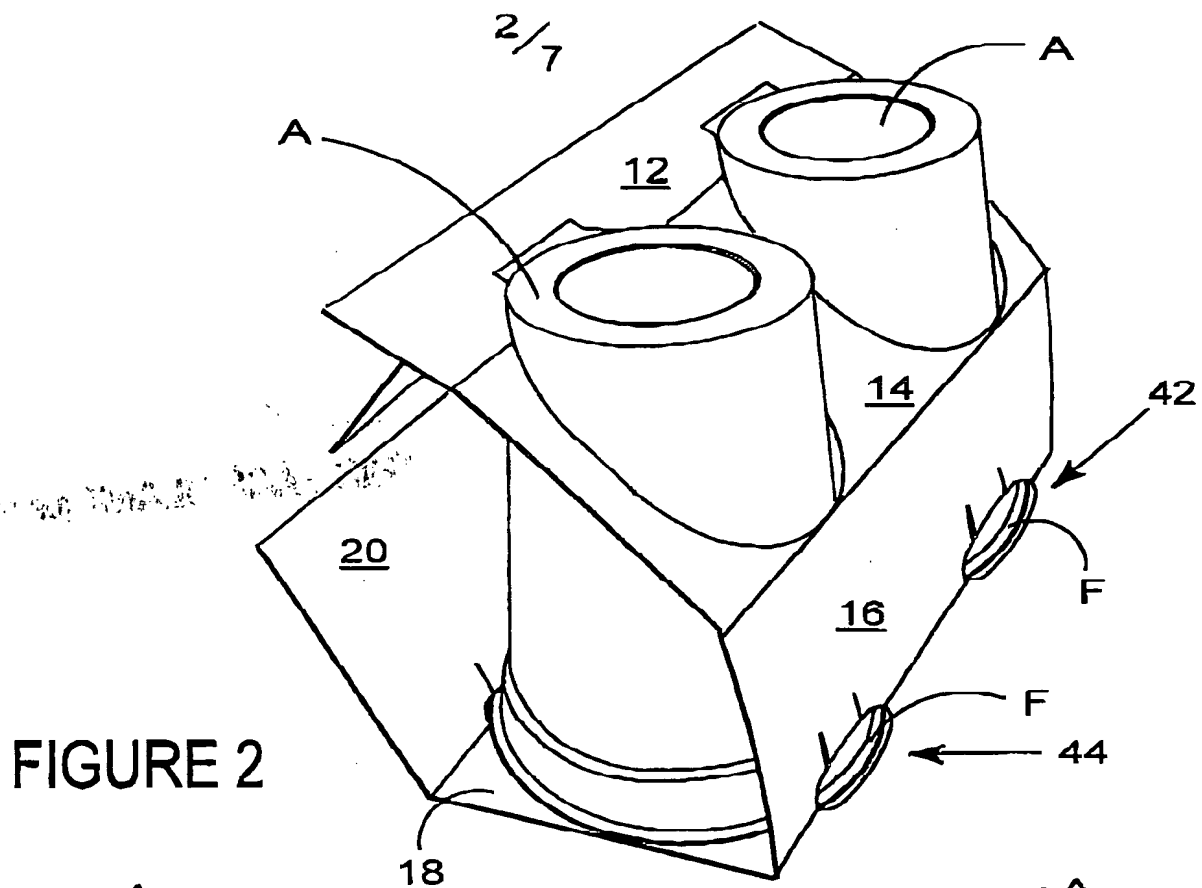


FIGURE 1

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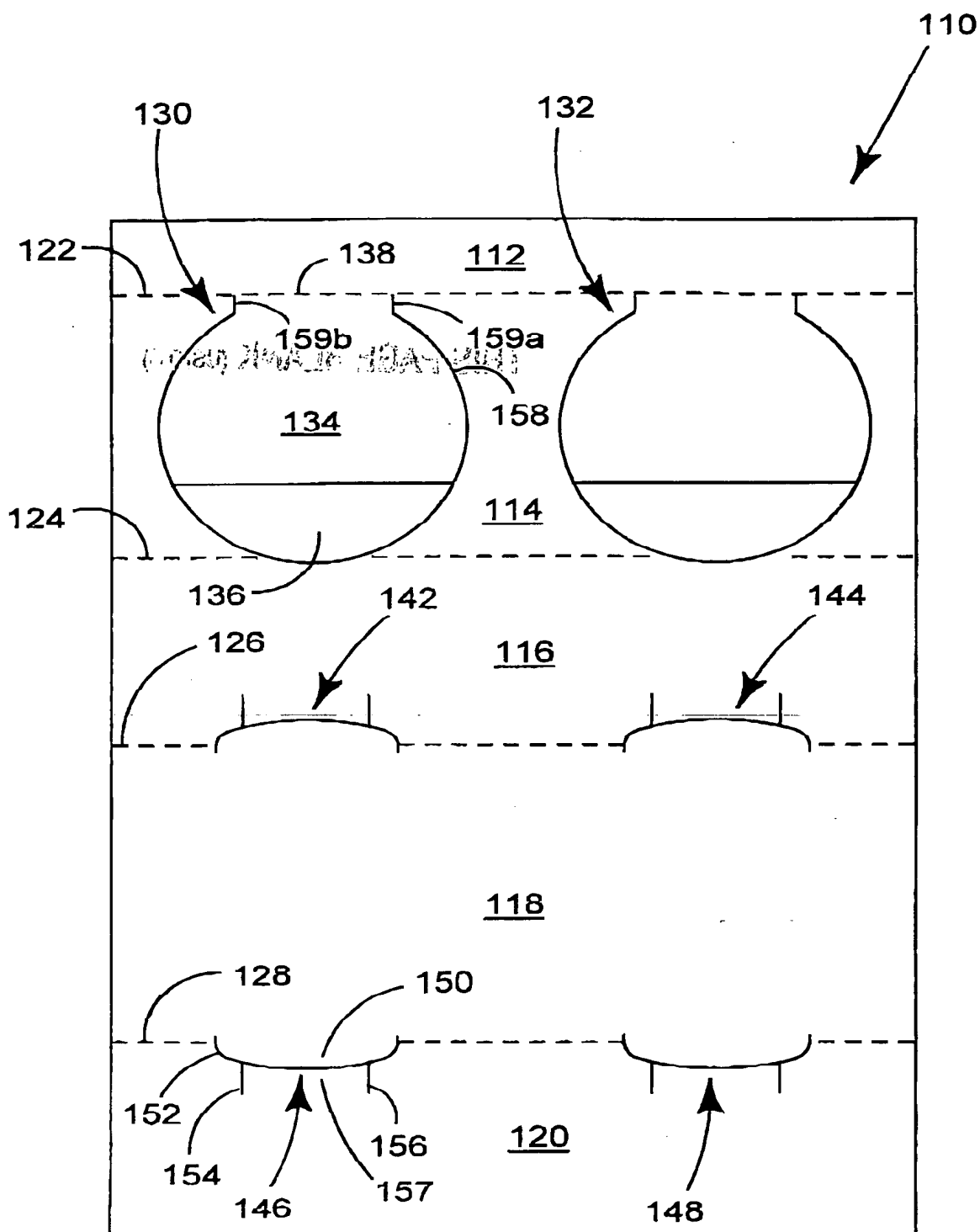
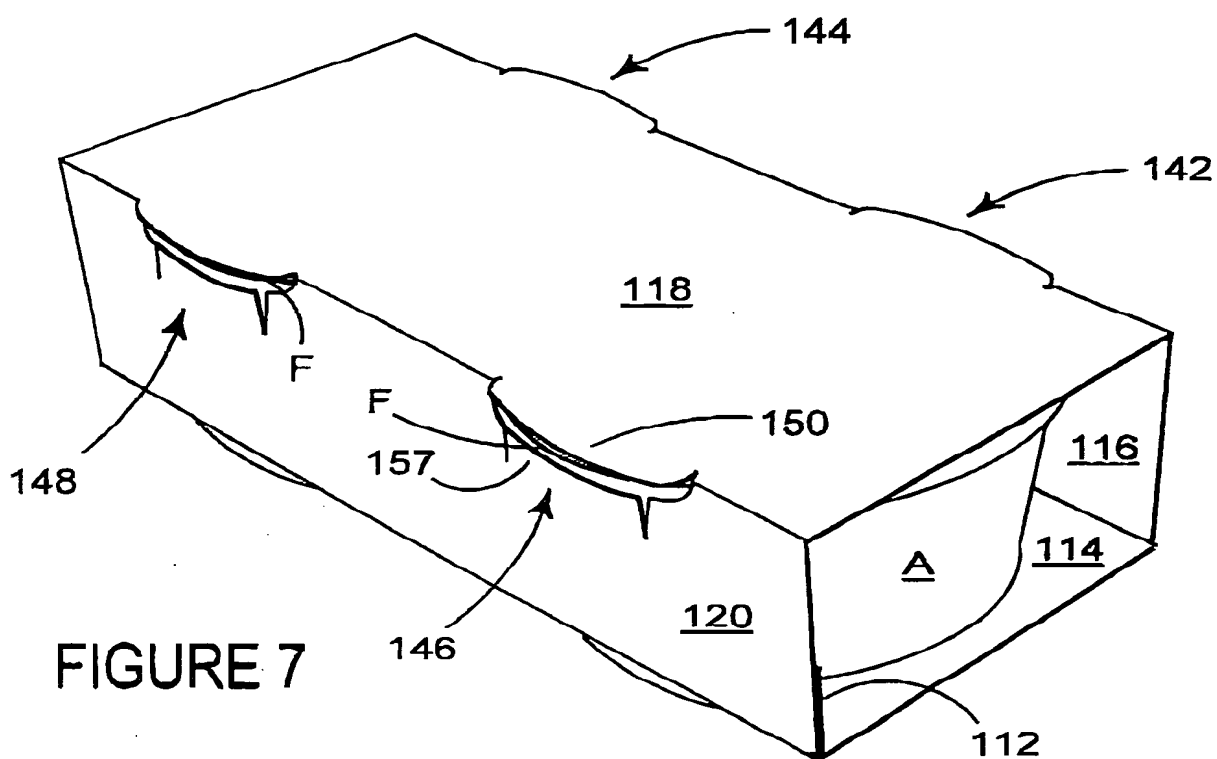
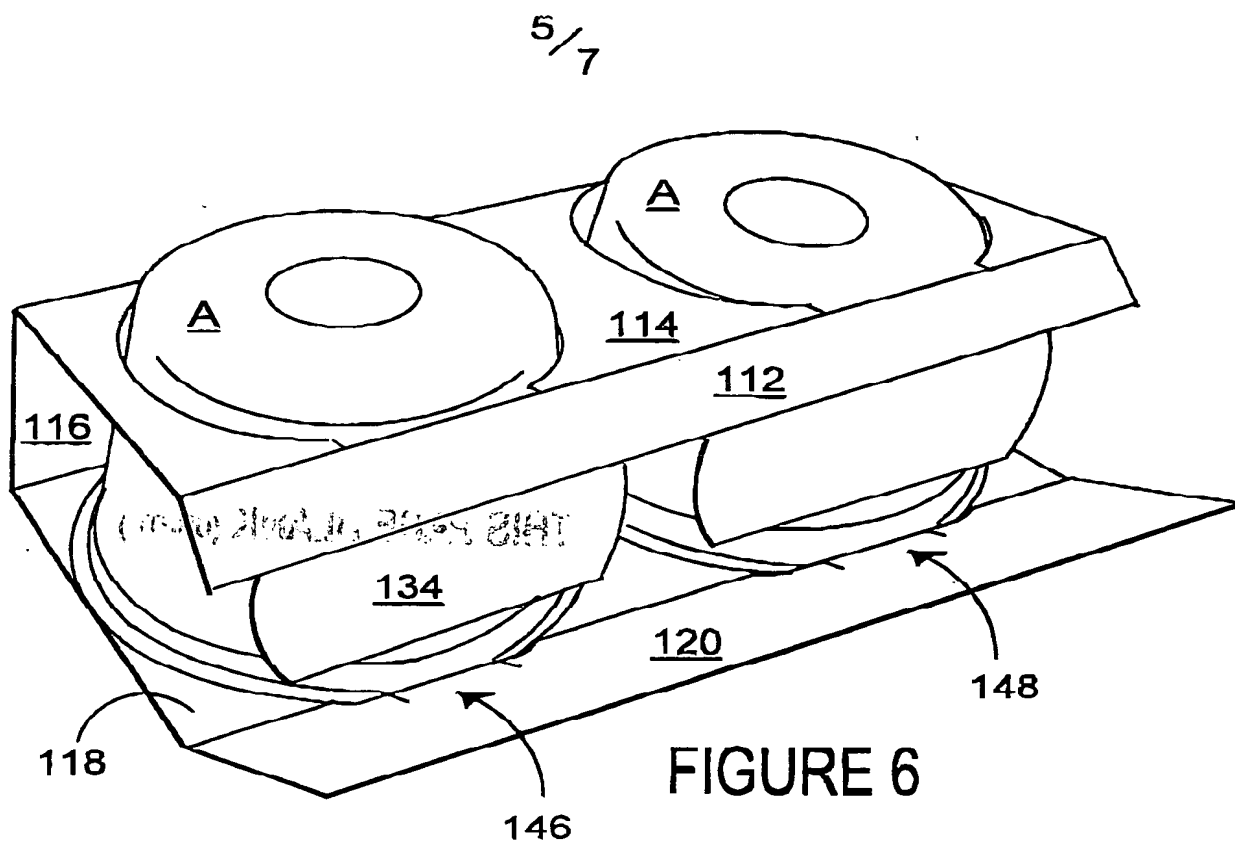


FIGURE 5

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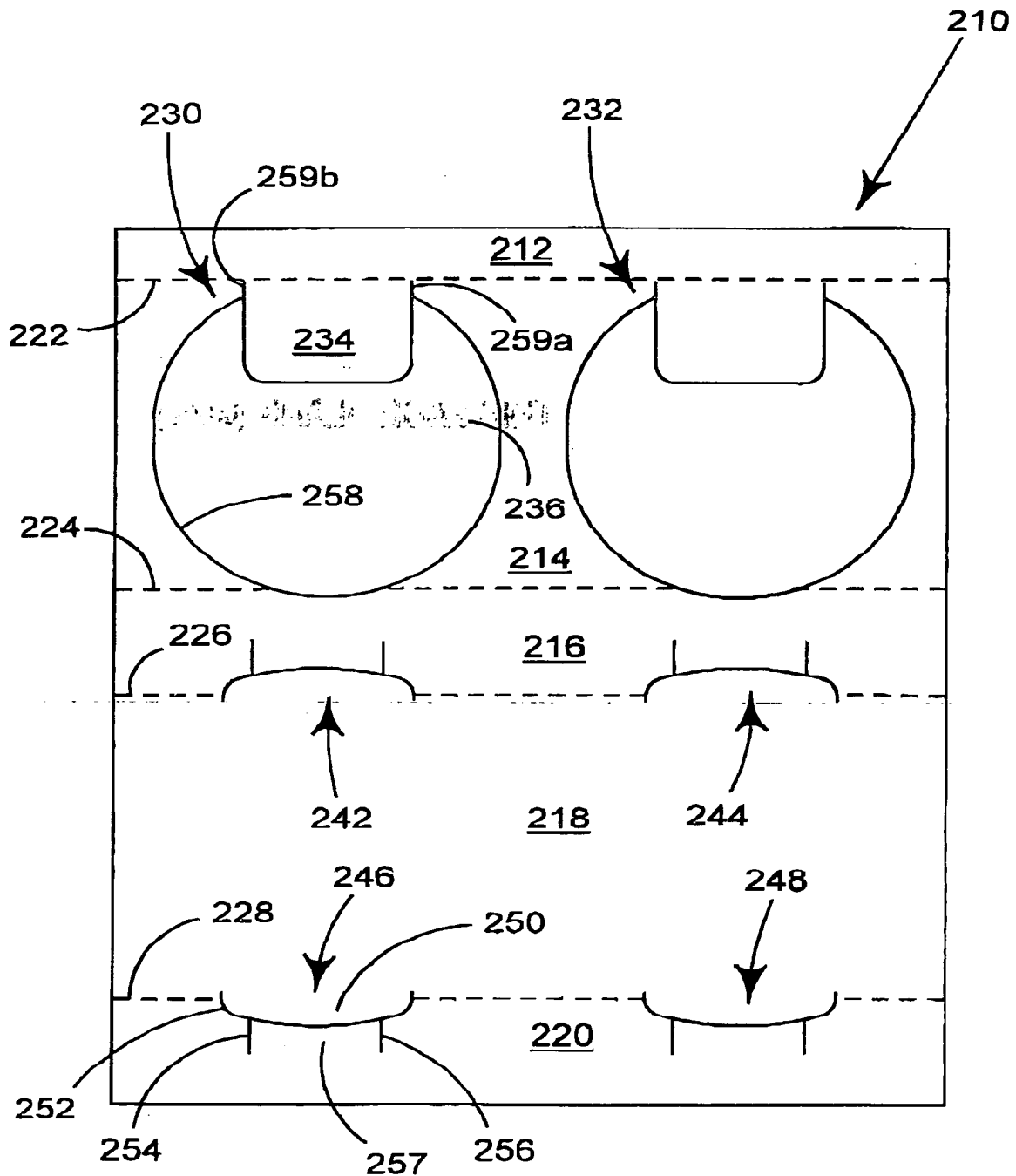
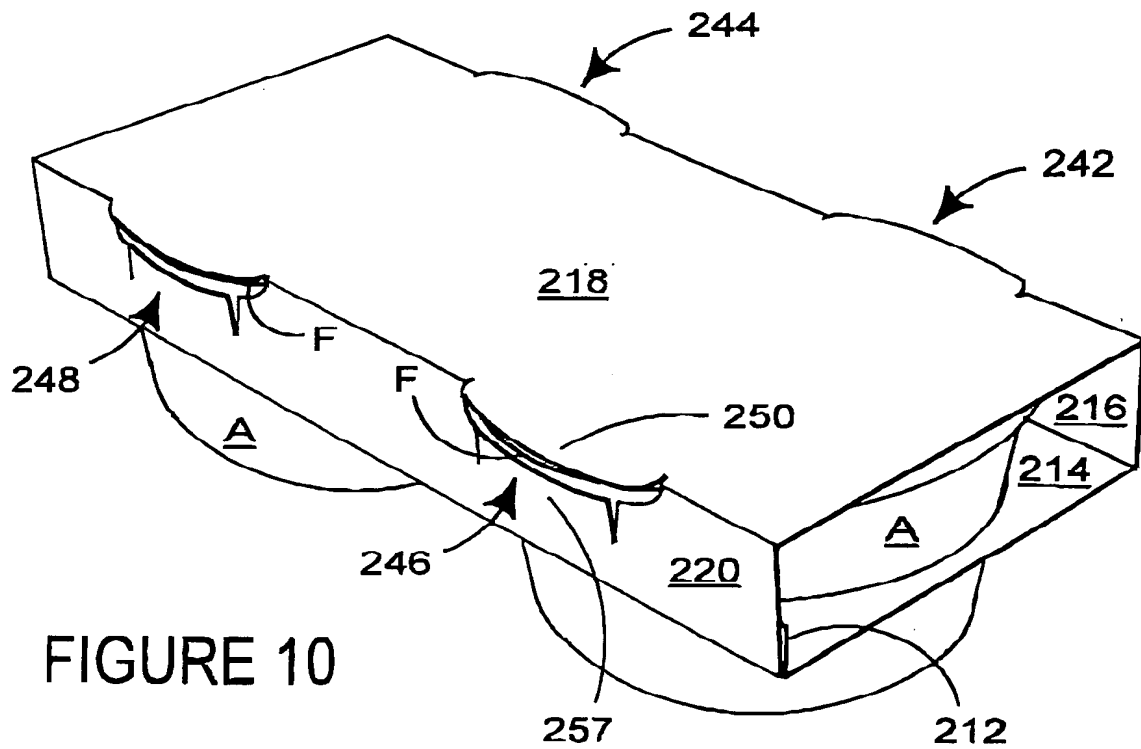
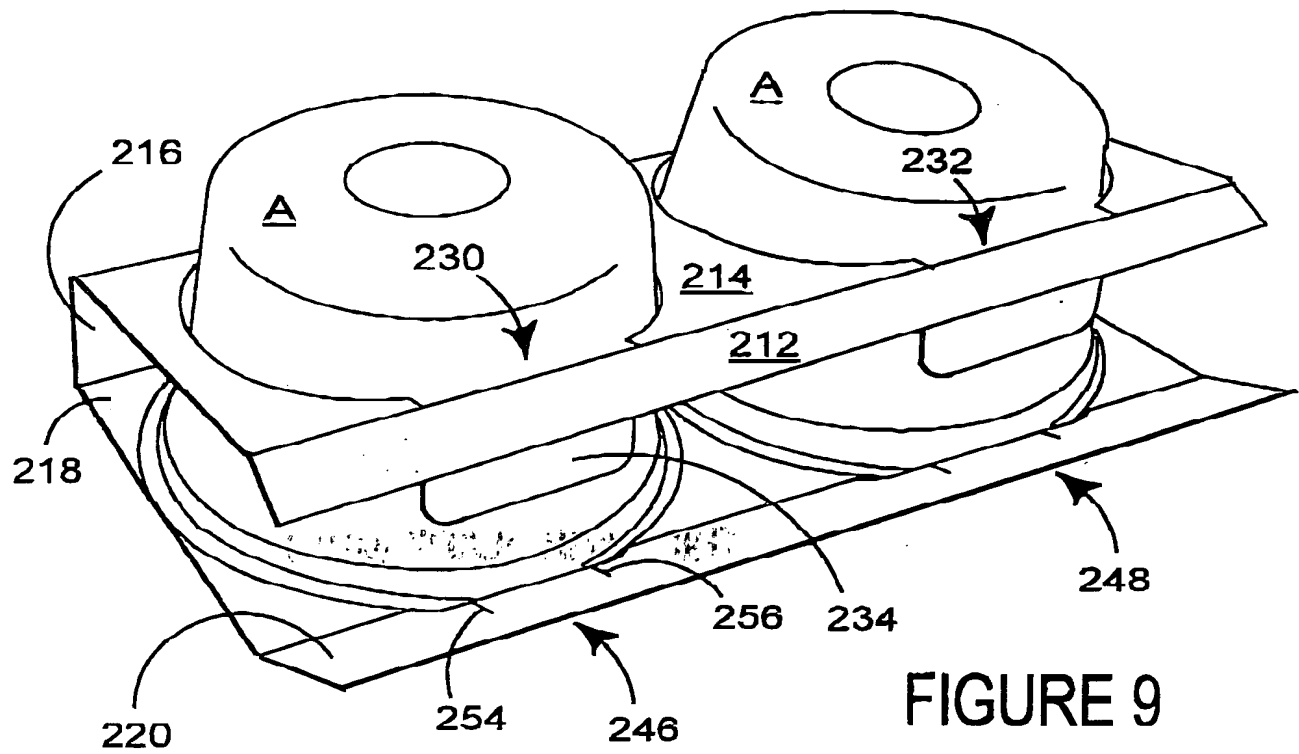


FIGURE 8

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